

# NATIONAL

5¢  
12



DECEMBER  
No. 51

# COMICS

10¢



## THE BARKER

finds THE MISSING LINK  
in a chain of strange events!





WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM





# Given

Your Choice of Valuable **GIFTS** OR CASH

Pick out the gift you want from the articles shown or from the big gift circular included with your first order.



**POWERFUL TELESCOPE**

GIVEN for selling as few as 5 boxes.

**CAMERA**  
Candid type.

GIVEN for selling 1 order as per catalog.



## Birthstone RING

New, dainty ring set with birthstone correct for your month.

GIVEN for selling as few as 5 boxes. A Good Luck Gift.

### 6 TEASPOONS

The Silverware you will adore. 6 spoons GIVEN for selling 1 order as explained in gift circular.



### TEASPOONS

### SET OF DISHES

Complete set of dishes for four, beautifully decorated. GIVEN for selling 1 order as explained in gift circular.

### BASEBALL GAME

Enjoyed by old and young, complete with score pad. GIVEN for selling only 1 order.



### HOLSTER SET

Cowboy Outfit, Pistol and Holster. GIVEN for selling only 1 order.

### WALKY-TALKY

Gives hours of entertainment. GIVEN for selling only 1 order.



SEND TODAY

### LEATHER BILLFOLD

Full sized leather billfold. GIVEN for selling as few as 5 boxes.

### FOUNTAIN PEN

Also pen sets. GIVEN for selling 1 order, as per catalog. We trust you. Send today.



### SOFTBALL SET

3-piece outfit. Regulation ball, bat and cap. GIVEN for selling 1 order as per catalog.

**GOLD CROWN PRODUCTS, Dept. E-521, Jefferson, Iowa.**

Enclose this coupon in an envelope or paste it on a postcard and send it to **GOLD CROWN PRODUCTS, Dept. E-521, Jefferson, Iowa,** for order to start.

Name .....

Address .....

City .....

State..... Gift Wanted. ....

# New ENLARGEMENT

Just to Get Acquainted We Will Beautifully Enlarge Your Favorite Snapshot, Photo, Kodak Picture, Print or Negative to 5 x 7 inches if You Enclose the Coupon and a 3 Cent Stamp for Return Mailing



Everyone admires pictures in natural colors because the surroundings and loved ones are so true to life, just the way they looked when the pictures were taken. So we want you to know also about our gorgeous colored enlargements. Think of having that small picture or snapshot enlarged to 5 by 7-inch size so that the details and features you love are more life-like and natural. Over one million men and women have sent us their favorite snapshots and pictures for enlarging. Thousands write us how much they also enjoy their remarkably true-to-life, natural colored enlargements we have sent them in handsome black and gold, or ivory and gold frames.

Enclose this coupon with your favorite snapshot, picture or negative and send to **DEAN STUDIOS, Dept. 135, 211 W. 7th St., Des Moines, Iowa.**

Name ..... Color of Hair .....

Address ..... Color of Eyes .....

City..... State.....

You are now given a wonderful opportunity to receive a beautiful enlargement of your cherished snapshot, photo or Kodak picture. Please include the color of hair and eyes and get our new bargain offer giving you your choice of handsome frames with a second enlargement beautifully hand tinted in natural lifelike oil colors and sent on approval. Your original is returned with your enlargement. This amazing enlargement offer is our way of getting acquainted and letting you know the quality of our work. Send today as supplier are limited.

**DEAN STUDIOS, Dept. 135, 211 W. 7th St., Des Moines, Iowa**

THE

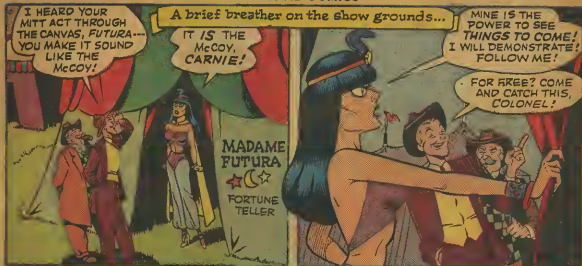
AH -- I SEE IT  
APPROACHING  
IN THE NEAR  
FUTURE -- A  
TERRIBLE AND  
TREMENDOUS  
MONSTER--  
NEITHER MAN  
NOR BEAST--  
SOMETHING  
THAT WOULD  
TERRIFY EVEN  
THE SCIENTISTS  
WHO WOULD  
CLASSIFY IT!

ASK IT WHAT  
IT'LL TAKE  
TO APPEAR  
IN OUR  
SHOW!

BARKER

by Klaus Nordling

Thrills! Chills! And TERROR! .....  
Carnie Calahan sees them as DRAWING CARDS for  
COLONEL LANE'S MAMMOTH CIRCUS!



MY SHIP LANDED ON THE ISLAND WHERE  
THESE THINGS LIVED IN TREE-NESTS!  
WE FOUGHT 'EM --- KILLED ALL  
BUT THIS ONE ---

UGLY  
BRUTE, ISN'T  
HE?



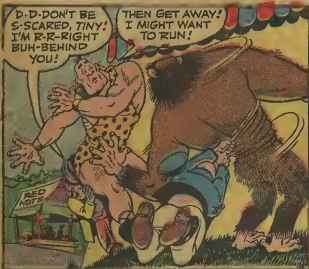
WHO -- YOU -- CALLING --  
UGLY???

I HEARD IT  
SPEAK!



D-D-DON'T BE  
S-SCARED, TINY!  
I'M R-R-RIGHT  
BUH-BEHIND  
YOU!

THEN GET AWAY!  
I MIGHT WANT  
TO RUN!



IT ISN'T A  
BEAST--NOR  
YET A MAN!

I -- DO -- NOT --  
LIKE -- MEN!



I'LL BUY  
YOUR  
MISSING  
LINK,  
MATE!

YOU GOT A BARGAIN!  
BUT BE CAREFUL --  
HE CAN GET MAD,  
BUT QUICK!



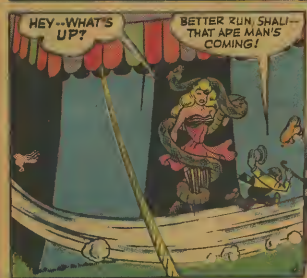
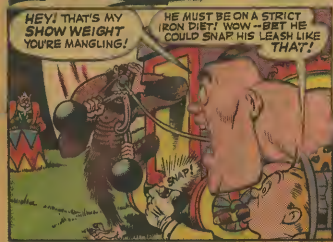
YOU -- MAKE -- SHOW -- OF -- ME?  
I -- WILL -- NOT -- SPEAK --  
AGAIN!



LOOK, CARNIE, A  
NEW ATTRACTION!  
THE MISSING LINK--  
HALF MAN, HALF  
BEAST! IT  
TALKS!

HA-KA!  
YOU'VE  
BEEN  
GIVEN  
THE  
GINZEL  
COLONEL!







QUICK, WHILE HE'S UNSTRUNG!  
INTO THE STRONGEST CAGE  
WITH HIM!

SSSSSS  
SSS!

RRRR  
RRR!



WHAT  
NOW,  
COLONEL?

WITH HIM  
LOCKED UP  
I'LL HAVE  
TIME TO  
THINK!



I WARNED YOU,  
CARNIE! NOW  
THE CRYSTAL  
SHOWS ME THAT—

DON'T, FUTURA! YOUR  
ACT'S TOO RICH FOR MY  
BLOOD! I'M GOING TO GO  
STUDY THAT MISSING  
LINK!



HEY FELLA --- IF YOU  
CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT  
I SAY --- I WANT TO  
BE FRIENDS!



THIS ISN'T A BAD LIFE--GIVING SHOWS--  
AND WE'VE GOT SOME SWELL CHARAC-  
TERS TO PAL YOU WITH! GET IT!  
OH--YOU WANT TO SHAKE HANDS?



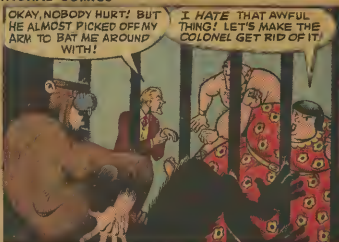
ARRRRRRRAAAH!

HEY!  
WHAT--!!



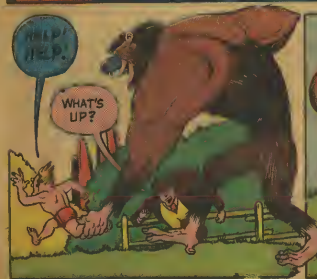


NATIONAL COMICS



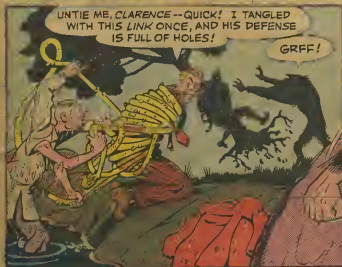
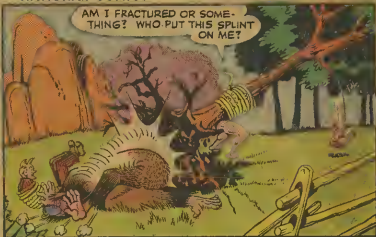
Later... Unguarded for the moment is the new attraction....



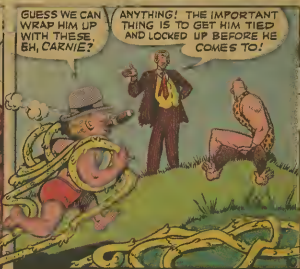
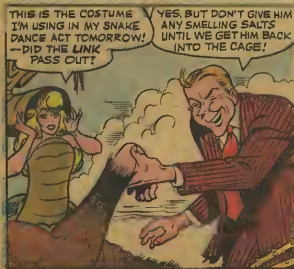
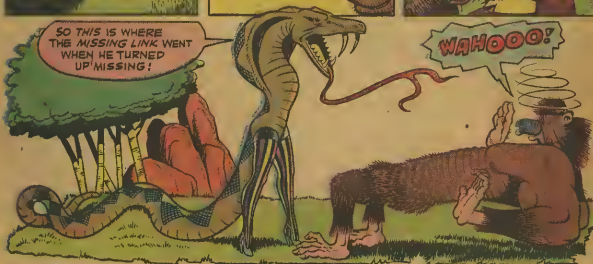










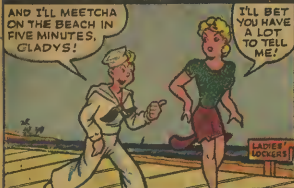






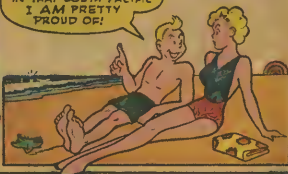
# SALTY WATERS

AND I'LL MEETCHA  
ON THE BEACH IN  
FIVE MINUTES,  
GLADYS!

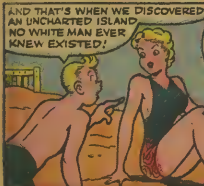


I'LL BET  
YOU HAVE  
A LOT  
TO TELL  
ME!

WELL, ONE THING I DID  
IN THAT SOUTH PACIFIC  
I AM PRETTY  
PROUD OF!



AND THAT'S WHEN WE DISCOVERED  
AN UNCHARTED ISLAND  
NO WHITE MAN EVER  
KNEW EXISTED!



I WAS THE FIRST OF  
OUR LANDING PARTY ASHORE  
--AND AS WE KNEW NO JAPS  
WERE AROUND, I COULD FEEL  
LIKE A REAL COLUMBUS IN  
COMFORT-- AND  
PLANT THE  
FLAG!



TOO BAD NO PHOTOGRAPHERS  
WERE AROUND, BECAUSE IT MUST  
BEEN A VERY  
THRILLING SIGHT.  
IF I DO SAY  
SO!



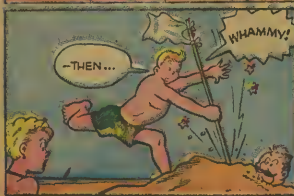
THE SUN WAS JUST SETTING IN A  
GORGEOUS GLOW OVER THAT  
VOLCANIC ISLE WHEN I TOOK  
THE FLAG  
LIKE THIS  
AND--



--AIMING  
IT AT THE  
VERY CREST  
OF THE  
CRATER'S RIM--



--I TOOK  
MY FLAG  
STAFF  
AND--



WHAMMY!

--THEN...

THE VOLCANO  
EXPLODED?

NO! NO!  
HELP!



# QUICKSILVER

You may not  
be able to *SEE*  
your peril---  
**SMASH IT  
ANYWAY!**

Quicksilver, once a trapeze  
artist, swings over  
a sickening abyss  
of menacing  
terror!



A stranger in town...

THREE AGAINST  
ONE! WITH GUNS---  
COWARDS!



PERHAPS I WILL  
MAKE THINGS  
MORE EVEN---

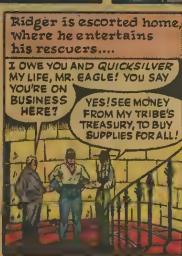
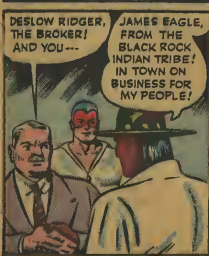
THAT CITIZEN  
HASN'T ANY  
BUSINESS OF  
HIS OWN TO MIND  
SO GIVE HIM  
THE BUSINESS!



Not far away, a figure  
senses action....

NEXT STREET--  
A SCUFFLE!  
MAYBE---







Leaving, Quicksilver and Eagle say goodbye...

SO LONG, EAGLE, I'M GOING THIS WAY!

AND I THIS! YOU ARE WHAT MY PEOPLE CALL A BRAVE WARRIOR!

WALKED INTO THE TRAP!

GOT HIM FROM BEHIND, EH? WELL, TRY TO FIGHT ME FACE TO FACE!

THE OTHER MEDDLER!

I'LL KNOCK OUT YOUR BRAINS...  
**UFF!**

AND I'LL KNOCK OUT YOUR LIVER!

YOU'RE HARD AS AN IRON MAN... BUT I'LL PUT DENTS IN YOU!

**CLANK! CLANK!**

EAGLE! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

**OHHHH!**

**SPLASH!**

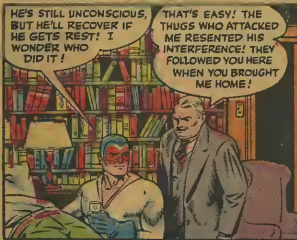


HE CLUBBED  
YOU HARD--BUT  
WE'RE NOT FAR  
FROM HELP!

And so Quicksilver hurries  
back to Ridger's home ....

HE'S HURT?  
BADLY? WHAT  
HAPPENED?

A SNEAK  
ATTACK! NOW'S  
YOUR TURN  
TO HELP  
HIM!



HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS,  
BUT HE'LL RECOVER IF  
HE GETS REST! I  
WONDER WHO  
DID IT!

THAT'S EASY! THE  
THUGS WHO ATTACKED  
ME RESENTED HIS  
INTERFERENCE! THEY  
FOLLOWED YOU HERE  
WHEN YOU BROUGHT  
ME HOME!



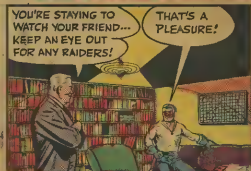
INTERESTING  
THEORY! BUT  
**WHO WERE**  
THOSE  
THUGS?

DON'T  
KNOW! BUT  
IT SEEMS  
LOGICAL!  
YOU'D BETTER  
LOCK THE  
DOORS!



YOU HAVE SEVERAL  
INTERESTING  
THINGS HERE,  
MR. RIDGER!

YES---  
THAT  
ARMOR  
YOU'RE STUDYING  
BELONGED TO MY  
ANCESTORS! AND  
I HAVE JEWELS,  
MONEY, SILVER!  
RICH LOOT FOR  
ROBBERS!



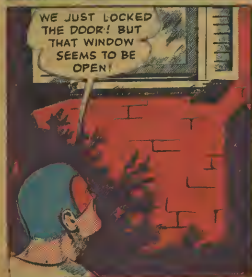
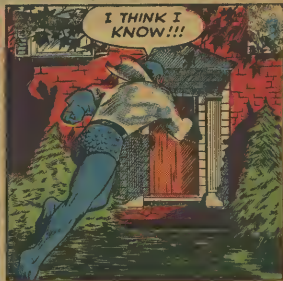
YOU'RE STAYING TO  
WATCH YOUR FRIEND---  
KEEP AN EYE OUT  
FOR ANY RAIDERS!

THAT'S A  
PLEASURE!

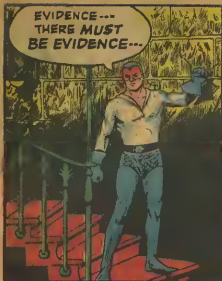


GREAT  
POWERS! WHAT  
WAS THAT?

CRASH!

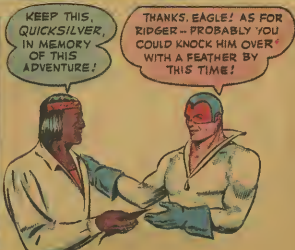
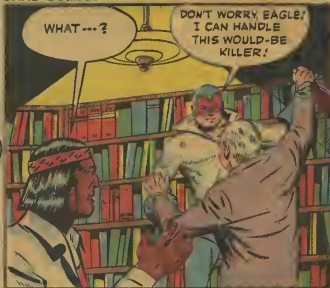


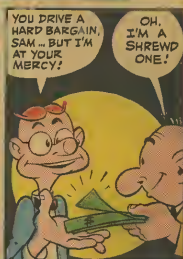




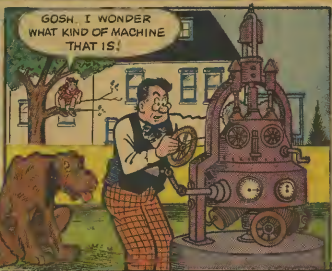
HE SAVED YOU --- AND YOU REPAID HIM BY DISGUIISING YOURSELF AND ATTACKING! I GUESSED IT WHEN I SAW THAT HAMMER HAD BEEN THROWN THROUGH THE WINDOW FROM THE *INSIDE*!

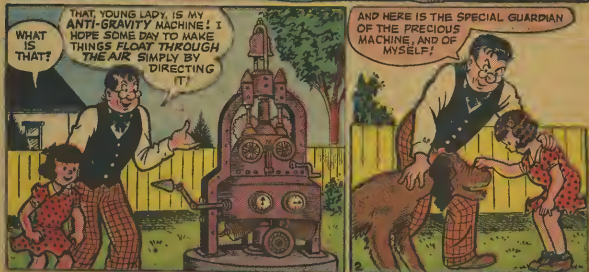
HE HAS MONEY FROM HIS TRIBE-- A FORTUNE! YOU WON'T KEEP ME FROM GETTING IT!

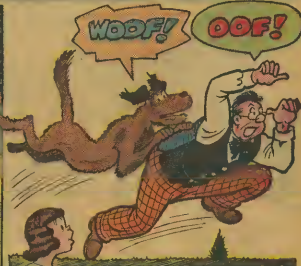


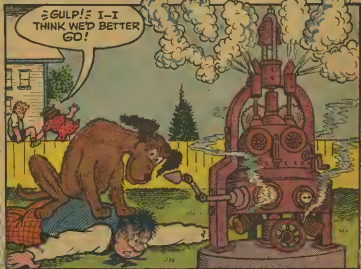
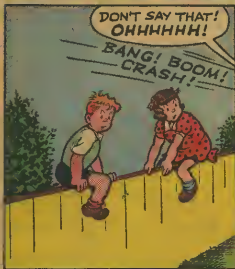




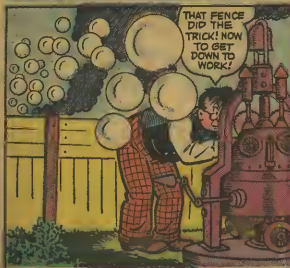
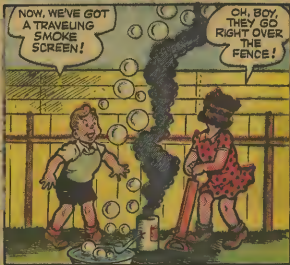
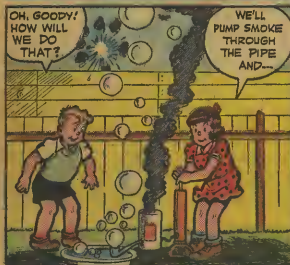
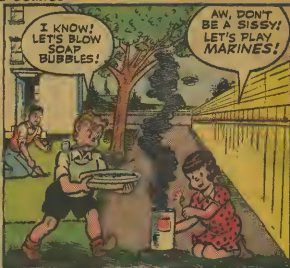
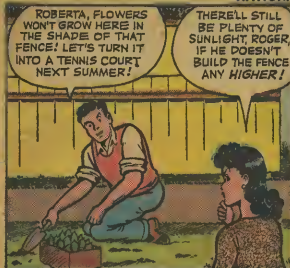


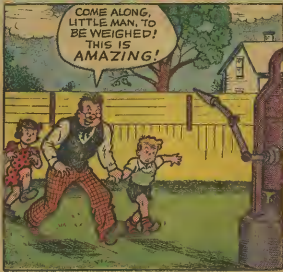
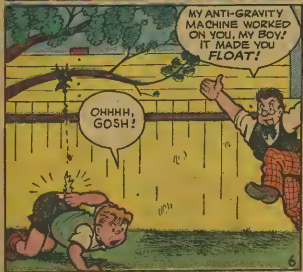
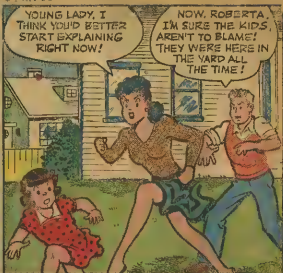




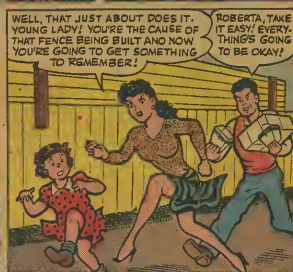
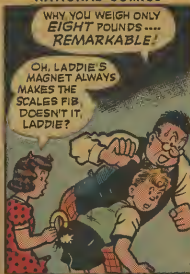
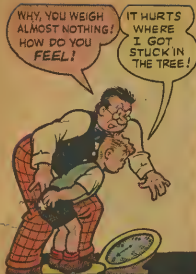








NATIONAL COMICS



# Sally O'NEIL

*The luckiest day  
in policewoman  
Sally O'Neil's  
life was the day  
she tried to tackle  
"Soup" Simpson  
--and missed!*





One night, as Sally walks homeward...



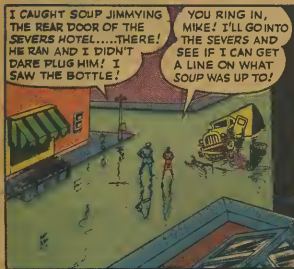


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SALLY?

I G-GUESS SO -- BUT FOR PETE'S SAKE --- WHAT HAPPENED, MIKE?

THE LUCKIEST MISS OF YOUR LIFE, LADY! THAT WAS "SOUP" SIMPSON, CARRYING A BOTTLE OF NITROGLYCERINE!

UHP! IF I'D DOWNED HIM, THEY'D HAVE BEEN PICKING ME UP WITH A BLOTTER! HE BLEW UP WHEN HE HIT THAT CAR!



I CAUGHT SOUP JIMMYING THE REAR DOOR OF THE SEVERS HOTEL.....THERE! HE RAN AND I DIDN'T DARE PLUG HIM! I SAW THE BOTTLE!

YOU RING IN, MIKE! I'LL GO INTO THE SEVERS AND SEE IF I CAN GET A LINE ON WHAT SOUP WAS UP TO!



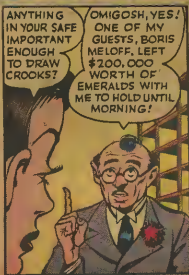
GO AHEAD, SALLY! WE'LL BE BUSY TRYING TO IDENTIFY THE POOR DEVIL WHO WAS DRIVING THAT CAR!

UGH! I THINK I'LL SWEAR OFF TACKLING CROOKS ON DARK NIGHTS!



UHP! A LADY POLICEMAN! WH-WHAT'S WRONG?

FORTUNATELY, NOTHING AT THE MOMENT! BUT A SAFE-CRACKER WAS TRYING TO JIMMY YOUR BACK DOOR!



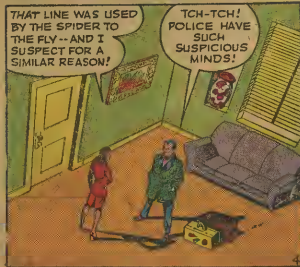
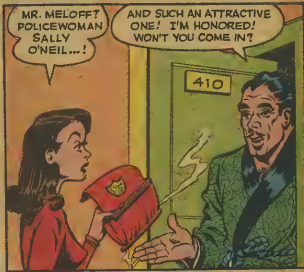
ANYTHING IN YOUR SAFE IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO DRAW CROOKS?

OMIGOSH, YES! ONE OF MY GUESTS, BORIS MELOFF, LEFT \$200,000 WORTH OF EMERALDS WITH ME TO HOLD UNTIL MORNING!



MMMM! THAT'S SUGAR ENOUGH TO DRAW PLENTY OF FLIES! LET'S SEE THE BAIT!

I'LL GET IT! I'M SURE GLAD THE POLICE STOPPED THAT CROOK!







WHMMM! IN THAT CASE I'LL HAVE TO ASK MY-- ER-- ASSISTANT, LEFTY, TO STEP FROM HIS HIDING PLACE AND TAKE YOUR GUN AWAY FROM YOU!

NO, YOU DON'T! I'M NOT TURNING AROUND ON AN OLD GAG LIKE THAT!



GENTLY, LEFTY! MUSTN'T BE ROUGH WITH ONE SO LOVELY!

HAH! YOU DON'T KNOW THIS BABE, BOSS! SHE'S WORSEN' TEN WILDCATS WHEN IT COMES TO A SCRAP!



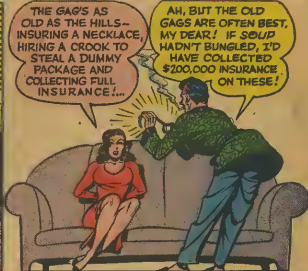
I REGRET THIS, MY DEAR! BUT YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE INTERFERED WITH MY LITTLE MONEY-RAISING PLAN!

YOU'LL HAVE TO ADMIT, IT WASN'T A VERY SMART PLAN, BORIS!



THE GAG'S AS OLD AS THE HILLS-- INSURING A NECKLACE, HIRING A CROOK TO STEAL A DUMMY PACKAGE AND COLLECTING FULL INSURANCE!...

AH, BUT THE OLD GAGS ARE OFTEN BEST, MY DEAR! IF SOUP HADN'T BUNGLED, I'D HAVE COLLECTED \$200,000 INSURANCE ON THESE!



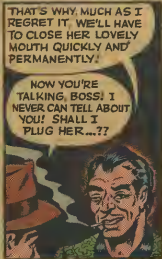
LOOK, BOSS--IF THIS DAME STAYS ALIVE SHE'LL HAVE EVERY COPPER IN THE COUNTRY ON OUR TRAILS BEFORE MORNING!

OH, YOU'RE DEFINITELY RIGHT, LEFTY!



THAT'S WHY. MUCH AS I REGRET IT, WE'LL HAVE TO CLOSE HER LOVELY MOUTH QUICKLY AND PERMANENTLY!

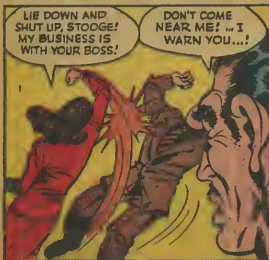
NOW YOU'RE TALKING, BOSS! I NEVER CAN TELL ABOUT YOU! SHALL I PLUG HER...??

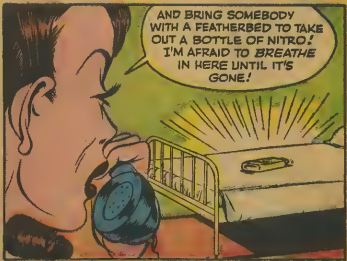
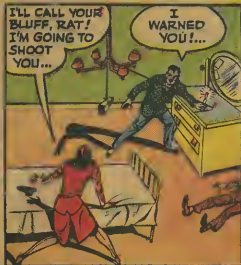


NOTHING SO CRUDE, LEFTY! NOW HERE IS A BOTTLE OF SOUP'S OWN NITRO AND IT GIVES ME A RIPPING IDEA!

WHY, YOU COLD-BLOODED, GRINNING APE!



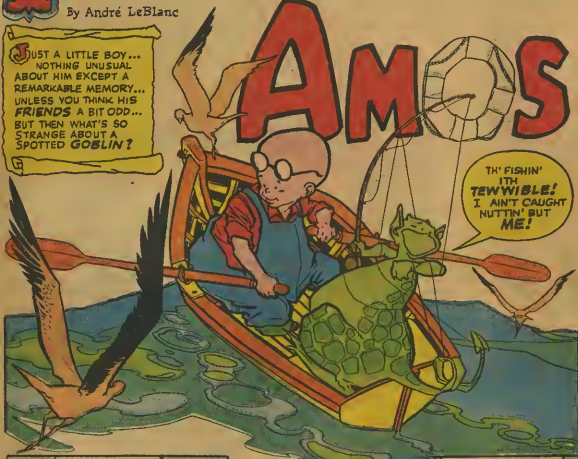




# INTELLECTUAL AMOS

By André LeBlanc

JUST A LITTLE BOY...  
NOTHING UNUSUAL  
ABOUT HIM EXCEPT A  
REMARKABLE MEMORY...  
UNLESS YOU THINK HIS  
FRIENDS A BIT ODD...  
BUT THEN WHAT'S SO  
STRANGE ABOUT A  
SPOTTED GOBLIN?



A BOTTLE!  
WOULDN'T IT  
BE ROMANTIC  
IF IT CONTAINED  
A MESSAGE?

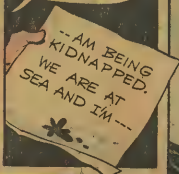




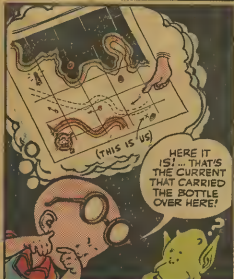
WE HAVE STUMBLED ON SOMETHING...! THIS IS A PLEA FOR HELP!



TAKE A LOOK!

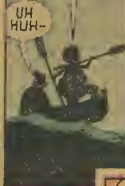


WITH HIS REMARKABLE MEMORY, INTELLECTUAL AMOS SELECTS, MENTALLY, A COASTAL CHART SHOWING THE SURROUNDING TIDES AND CURRENTS...



WE'RE GOING TO FOLLOW THAT CURRENT BACK TO THOSE KIDNAPPERS! ARE YOU GAME, WILBUR?

UH HUH--



MAYBE WE CAN HELP, BUT THE SEA IS MIGHTY BIG...HOW CAN WE FIND THE PLACE?



WILBUR, WHEN PEOPLE ARE IN TROUBLE AND ASK FOR HELP, **SOMEBODY'S** GOT TO HELP THEM!

THWELL! LET'TH LET THUMBUDDY ELTH!



THERE! SEE THAT BOAT? I'LL BET THAT'S WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR!

THEY'RE BECALMED! THERE'S NO WIND!

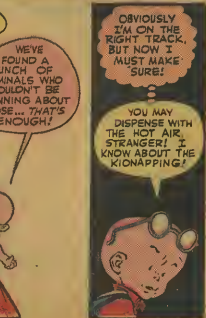
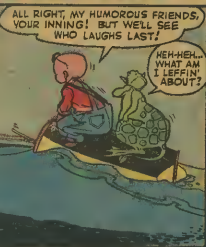
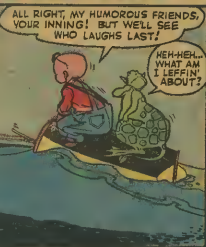
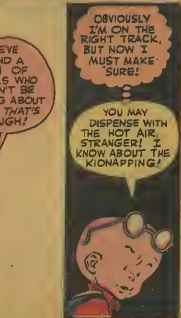
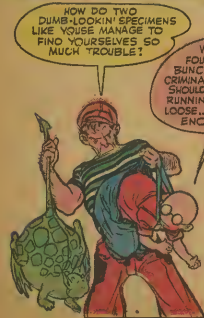
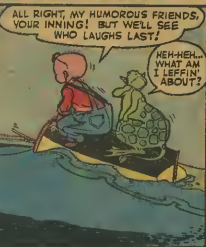
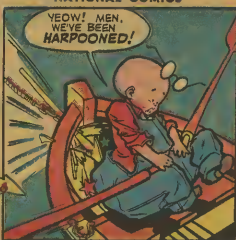


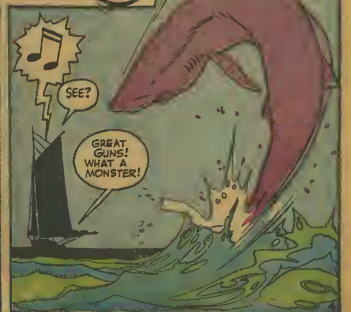
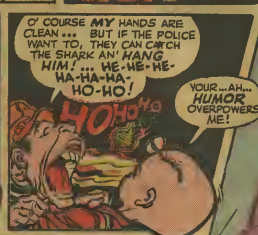
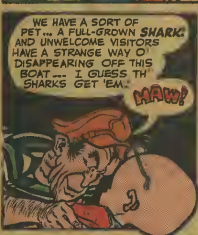
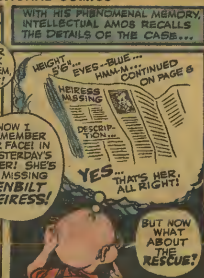
HEY, CHIEF! SOMEBODY'S COMIN'... AND ... ULP!

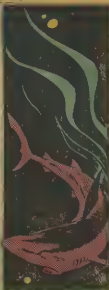
WELL? ...WHERE'S TH' MANNERS YER PORE OLE MAMA TAUGHT YOU ON HOW TO RECEIVE GUESTS?

GIVE 'EM THE GUN!













GO ON...

I CAN...

KEEP IT UP...

ATH LONG...

ATH YOU... CAN...

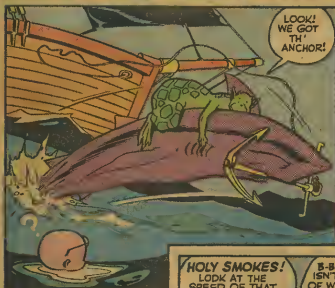


WHEN YOU  
ITH WEADY TO  
TALK TURKEY,  
WE'LL DO  
BITHNETH!

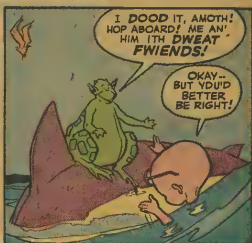


I KNEW  
YOU WOULD  
THEE THINGETH  
MY WAY!

LET'IT  
GO!



LOOK!  
WE GOT  
TH' ANCHOR!



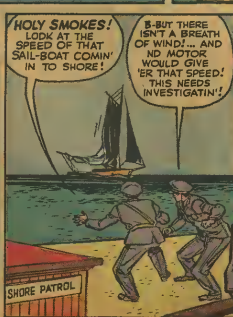
I DOOD IT, AMOTH!  
HOP ABOARD! ME AN'  
HIM ITH DWAT  
FWIENDS!

OKAY...  
BUT YOU'D  
BETTER  
BE RIGHT!



HEY!  
WE'RE  
MOVIN'!

DON'T  
BE SILLY!  
THERE'S NO  
WIND!... BESIDES  
...**UPLP!**...  
WE ARE  
MOVIN'!

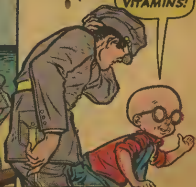


**HOLY SMOKES!**  
LOOK AT THE  
SPEED OF THAT  
SAIL-BOAT COMIN'  
IN TO SHORE!

B-BUT THERE  
ISN'T A BREATH  
OF WIND!... AND  
ND MOTOR  
WOULD GIVE  
'ER THAT SPEED!  
THIS NEEDS  
INVESTIGATIN'!

NOW MAYBE  
YOU CAN  
TELL ME WHAT  
WAS DRIVING  
THAT BOAT  
SO FAST,  
EH?

SURE... VITAMINS!  
...RECENT  
DISCOVERIES  
HAVE SHOWN  
THAT **SHARK  
LIVER** IS BY  
FAR SUPERIOR  
TO COD-LIVER AS  
A SOURCE OF  
VITAMIN SUPPLY!  
GET IT...?  
**VITAMINS!**



SHORE PATROL

# STRANGE ESCAPE

FOR more days than he could remember, Jules had been pacing his cell. The blackness of the small cubicle was only equalled by the blackness of his bitter thoughts.

"Curse them!" he muttered for the thousandth time. "Curse every last one of them. I'll get even. I'll get even with the dirty rats yet!"

The deep rolling of thunder reverberated through the thick stone walls of the prison. And, as Jules stopped before the tiny barred window, rain swirled inward, wetting his face.

For five long years Jules had been thus confined . . . but a small fraction of the life sentence he was serving for the bestial crime he had committed.

Jules was not sorry for killing Banning. He had hated the man with a deep, burning hatred. Banning was a political bigwig. Through crafty manipulation he had gouged Jules out of a sweet racket in the city. And that was signing his death warrant. Jules had cornered him in his office one night, given him a chance to keep his life by reinstating Jules.

But Banning was hard-headed. He had laughed in Jules' face. That was his last laugh. They had found Politician Banning dead, and Jules was sent up for life.

Jules had felt sure that he was making a fine picture of suicide. No fingerprints on the revolver except Banning's own.

The pistol in the dead man's hand. Not fired too far away; there were powder burns on Banning's face. For some time the police thought Banning had killed himself.

Then a smart detective had made a careful examination of Banning's right hand; there were no powder streaks on it. And he knew that all revolvers leave a faint trace of powder on the hand when fired.

Jules muttered as he strode the few feet of his cell. The next time, he'd be smart.

But tonight, black despair and vengeance reigned supreme in his soul; he wished only to escape, in order that he might seek out his destroyers and in turn destroy them. For Jules lived with one thought—to get out and kill every man and woman who had been on the jury that sent him up.

His steps became more feverishly agitated; perspiration gathered on his forehead and he clenched his hands until the stubby nails bit into the flesh.

The thunder crashed, making the huge prison tremble. Jules thought, "What if the joint is struck by lightning? Maybe I could get out without being smashed by rocks."

He thought of his first trip, were he free. Judge Bekins. Yeah, he'd get the old judge first thing. Then Crandell, the District Attorney. And then Holmes, the chief of police, who gloated on the conviction, making a statement to the press

that he'd trap every last rat in the city until he had them all.

By the devious "grapevine" channels, Jules had learned that most of the "rats" had been trapped under Holmes' regime.

A brilliant flash of lightning illumined the far wall of his cell—lighting the cell as it had never before been lighted. Jules' eyes became riveted upon a huge stone, on the lower tier. Were his eyes playing tricks upon him? Or had he in truth seen a tiny crack surrounding the stone, as if the cement were scraped away or altogether removed? Hardly daring to breathe, he tip-toed across the cell and fell on his knees before the stone, feeling its edges.

He gave a low cry. Yes, there was a deep crevice. And, what was more, the stone was loose! Jules tugged at it, tearing the flesh from his finger ends, sweat pouring from his face. Savagely he hurled the lock of matted hair out of his face and doubled his efforts.

Ah! The stone moved. At last he pulled it from its place and peered into the blackness beyond. Another lightning flash showed him what he had hardly hoped to find—a passage in the rock, leading downward from his cell.

Leading—where? Was this freedom at last?

Immediately in front of him (he saw it in a flash of lightning) there lay a yellowed piece of paper. With trembling

## NATIONAL COMICS

fingers he carried it to the window, through which shone faint rays of a lamp in the courtyard below. Carefully he unfolded the fragile paper. On it was a brief message, apparently written with some dark fluid. Blood! For the first time in his life, Jules was glad that he was able to read, if only a little. Haltingly he made out the few words:

I ESCAPED FROM THIS PASSAGE. MAY HE WHO FINDS THIS SHARE MY GOOD FORTUNE.

It was unsigned.

The tramp of the sentry's feet resounded outside the cell door. Jules threw himself over the stone until the steps died away; then he thrust his head and shoulders into the opening and began slowly worming his way along the narrow passage before him.

The walls of the tunnel were wet and slimy and a fetid odor assailed Jules' nostrils. But this was balm to his fevered senses. His hands and knees banged into jagged rocks, ripping the flesh, tearing his rotting clothes from him. But of all this Jules knew nothing. His eyes were gleaming, but one thought present in his mind—escape. He dug his bloody fingers into the mud and pushed himself onward steadily, flat on his stomach, like an ungainly serpent.

Where would the passage end? How long was it? Did it lead all the way under the prison? It made no difference to Jules. He would crawl and crawl, even if he had to go miles through the slimy, stinking sewer.

As he advanced the floor became steeper and steeper, slop-

ing at an ever-greater angle. The walls became yet wetter and more slimy and the jagged rocks bit deeper into his writhing limbs. Foot after foot, Jules propelled himself along the narrow path. His breath came in rustling gasps. There was a steady ringing in his head. The air was foul and there was little oxygen.

When—when would the passage end? Jules felt he must have crawled many miles. No telling when it would be day, and then the sentries would find his cell vacant—find the opening. . . . He increased his speed.

Then suddenly Jules stopped, and for one moment an agonizing fear shot through him. He could not turn around. He realized that it would be impossible for him ever to ascend, backwards, that sloping passage to regain his cell if *something* made that act imperative.

A cold shiver tingled his spine. But what could force him back to that cell? What?

He clenched his teeth and forged ahead with the super-

human strength of despair. Surely the end of the passage would come soon. His breathing was labored now, and black specks danced before his eyes. He would not last much longer without pure air. . . .

A sharp bend in the tunnel revealed a sight which made Jules gasp. A faint, circular opening in the distance permitted the rays of the moon to penetrate the terrible blackness. The end of the passage lay before him. Victory! Escapel

The cold air fanned his face and he breathed it in great gulps, hurrying now more than ever.

The passage became ever more sloping as he advanced. His body was inclined at a sickening angle. Strange streaks of blackness seemed to cross his line of vision, as he half fell, half slid the few feet remaining yet to be traversed. . . . Jules' head crashed into something hard; and he was partially stunned. A moment later he opened his eyes and saw before him a heavily barred iron grating, and—a skeleton.

**A REAL BARGAIN!**  
**NATIONAL COMICS**  
gives you  
Twice as much for your dime  
56 inside pages!  
**COUNT 'EM!**

NATIONAL COMICS

# The WHISTLER

by VERNON HENKEL

When police reporter Mallory Drake became the dread WHISTLER, he had no idea that one day his greatest assignment would be to trap himself!



By day, Mallory Drake is a police reporter... and a good one!

I WISH I KNEW WHAT'S COOKING! CAPTAIN NILES OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN IN WITH THE BOSS FOR ALMOST AN HOUR...

MAC SHANE  
EDITOR

DRAKE! COME ON IN HERE!

OH-OH!  
WHAT GIVES, I WONDER!

DRAKE, I'M PUTTING YOU ON A SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT!

THAT'S SWELL, BOSS! WHAT IS IT!

WE'RE GOING TO TRAP THE WHISTLER!

BAM!



WH...??? WHY TRAP THE WHISTLER? HE'S NO CROOK! HE SOLVES CRIMES FOR YOU!

YEAH! AND THAT'S JUST IT! ...



A FINE THING WHEN AMATEURS SOLVE OUR CRIMES FOR US! WHAT'LL THE PUBLIC SAY?

AND THINK OF THE STORY! IT'LL BE SENSATIONAL-- WHISTLER UNMASKED BY EVENING GLOBE! WOW!



HERE'S THE PLAN! ... AMBERS, THE BANKER, HAS AGREED TO PRETEND HE'S RECEIVED EXTORTION NOTES! WE'LL SPREAD THE STORY AROUND ...

THE WHISTLER'LL HEAR ABOUT IT, TRY TO STICK HIS NOSE IN AND GET NABBED! WE'LL HAVE COPS PLANTED ALL OVER THE PLACE!

ER--VERY CLEVER! ... WHEN DOES THIS HAPPEN --AND WHAT DO I DO?

AMBERS'LL PHONE US WHEN THE WHISTLER SHOWS UP! YOU'LL BE HIDDEN SOMEWHERE NEAR TO GET THE STORY!



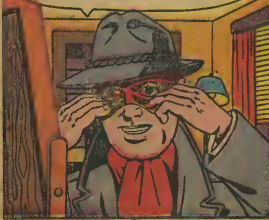
Later... A FINE MESS! IF THE WHISTLER DOESN'T SHOW UP, THEY'LL EITHER GUESS I'M THE WHISTLER OR THINK I TIPPED HIM TO THE TRAP!



AND IF THE WHISTLER DOES SHOW UP, HE'LL BE NABBED BY A DOZEN COPS! YET HE'S SWORN NEVER TO FIGHT AGAINST THE LAW...



SO-O-O-O, I GUESS THE WHISTLER WILL HAVE TO WALK INTO THE TRAP--AND TRUST TO LUCK AND BRAINS TO WIGGLE HIMSELF OUT AGAIN!



WELL HERE GOES NOTHING!  
I'LL PHONE AMBERS AND LET  
HIM KNOW THE WHISTLER  
IS COMING TO CALL...



Softly the telephone  
carries the eerie notes  
of the WHISTLER'S trademark

♪ MR. AMBERS  
THIS IS THE  
WHISTLER! I'D LIKE  
TO HELP YOU...



WHISTLER-- I'M GLAD YOU  
CALLED! I'M SUPPOSED TO  
PAY OFF TONIGHT AT MID-  
NIGHT -- HERE AT MY  
APARTMENT! PLEASE  
COME---

I'LL BE  
THERE, AMBERS!  
YOU CAN DEPEND  
ON THE  
WHISTLER!



THE STAGE IS SET! NOW, AS  
SOON AS MY BOSS CALLS MALLORY  
DRAKE WITH THE TIP-OFF ... AH.  
THAT MUST BE SHANE NOW!



DRAKE -- IT WORKED! THE WHISTLER'S  
DUE AT AMBERS' AT MIDNIGHT! YOU  
BE THERE EARLY! WE'LL PLANT  
THE COPS AHEAD OF TIME!

I'LL BE  
AROUND, BOSS--  
HIDING  
SOMEWHERE!



SINCE THEY EXPECT THE  
WHISTLER AT MIDNIGHT--  
I'LL GET THERE AN HOUR  
EARLY--SO I WON'T DIS-  
APPOINT ANYBODY!



THERE'S AMBERS' STUDY  
AND NOBODY IN SIGHT! I'M  
SURE THEY WON'T OBJECT  
IF I WAIT INSIDE WHERE  
IT'S WARM!



OH-OH! THAT MUST BE  
AMBERS COMING! THIS'LL  
BE A GOOD HIDING PLACE  
UNTIL TIME FOR THE  
WHISTLER'S PUBLIC  
APPEARANCE ...



PERFECT! THE WHISTLER'S COMING AND THE POLICE WILL GRAB HIM... BUT NOBODY KNOWS JUST HOW PERFECT IT IS FOR ME!



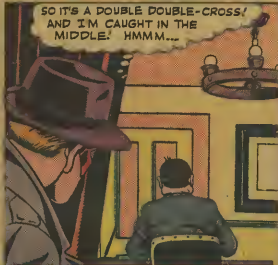
THIS WAS THE SCHEME I NEEDED TO COVER A SHORTAGE AT THE BANK! I'LL COVER MY OWN LOSSES AND LET THE WHISTLER TAKE THE BLAME



THEY TOLD ME TO MAKE UP \$10,000 IN BILLS AS BAIT! I'LL HIDE THE BILLS, CLAIM THE WHISTLER STOLE THEM, AND MAKE GOOD MY OWN BANK SHORTAGE!



SO IT'S A DOUBLE DOUBLE-CROSS! AND I'M CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE! HMMM...



ELEVEN O'CLOCK! THE POLICE WILL BE SURROUNDING THE PLACE NOW! THEY'LL LET THE WHISTLER IN!— BUT WHEN HE TRIES TO LEAVE...



Outside...

GOT THE HOUSE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED, CAPTAIN?

BETTER THAN THAT...



I'VE GOT A RING OF POLICE CLOSE TO THE HOUSE! BEHIND THEM I'VE GOT SEARCHLIGHTS SET UP TO GO ON THE MOMENT WE HEAR ANYTHING...



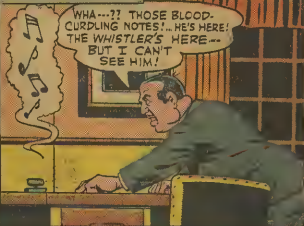
IT'LL BE LIGHT AS DAY! NOT EVEN A MOUSE COULD LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT BEING SEEN AND GRABBED!



ELEVEN-THIRTY! GUESS IT'S TIME TO GO INTO ACTION!



Like a ventriloquist, the WHISTLER can throw the weird notes of his whistle to a distant corner ...



WHA---?? THOSE BLOOD-CURDLING NOTES!...HE'S HERE! THE WHISTLER'S HERE-- BUT I CAN'T SEE HIM!

MAYBE YOU WEREN'T LOOKING THE RIGHT WAY, AMBERS!



TH-THE WHISTLER!

DON'T BE NERVOUS, AMBERS! I'VE COME TO HELP! TELL ME ABOUT THE--ER-- EXTORTION THREATS!



OH--UH-- --THE THREATS! Y-Y-YES, I'LL T-TELL YOU--

JUST--ER-- SIT DOWN, WHISTLER--AND I'LL--UH-- TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT!



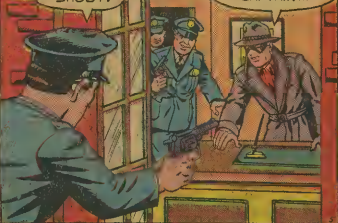
THANKS, SO MUCH!

THERE'S THE SIGNAL! THE WHISTLER'S IN THERE WITH AMBERS! I DUNNO HOW HE GOT THERE, BUT--



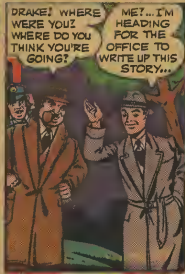
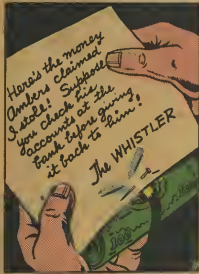
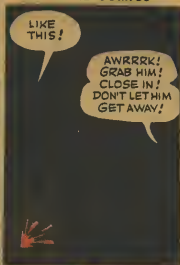
NEVER MIND THAT! CLOSE IN ON THE HOUSE!... I HOPE MALLORY DRAKE'S AROUND SOMEWHERE!

ALL RIGHT, WHISTLER! YOUR OUTLAW DAYS ARE OVER!... SURRENDER OR WE'LL SHOOT!



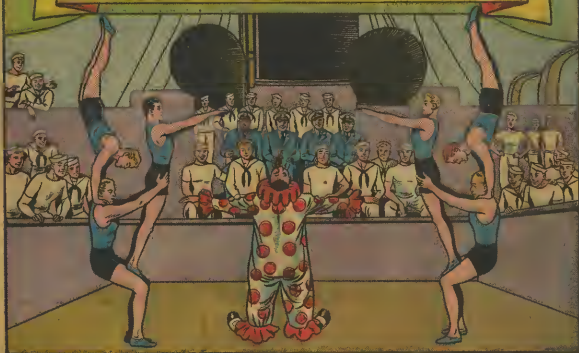
WELL, WELL! LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT ME SURROUNDED, CAPTAIN...





# Destroyer 171

It started out to be less than a routine assignment for the **U.S.S. PAWNEE**, fighting **DESTROYER 171**! For orders were simply to transport an entertainment troupe to the island of **Paasuvi**! But before the voyage was over the officers and crew learned a new lesson in Jap battle tactics...and they learned something about entertainers, too!



COMMANDER  
BLAKE!

YES,  
CONROY?

THESE ORDERS  
JUST NOW CAME ON  
THE WIRELESS!

ORDERS? BUT WE'RE  
ALREADY ASSIGNED TO  
A TASK FORCE!



WE'RE TO FALL OUT, SIR! THE FLEET COMMANDER HAS BEEN NOTIFIED!

"...TO TRANSPORT A TROUPE OF ENTERTAINERS FROM ISLAND X TO PAAASUVI!... WE'RE GOING TO PLAY NURSEMAID TO A LOT OF HAM ACTORS!"



At Island X, Destroyer 171 picks up its assigned cargo ..

HEY, LOOK! IT'S JACK HALLAM -- THE RADIO COMEDIAN!



WELCOME ABOARD THE PAWNEE, MR. HALLAM!

THANK YOU, COMMANDER! I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET JIM MAULSBY, THE CROONER; AND MISS BETTE DARCY!



Later, Destroyer 171 resumes its journey to Paaasuvu ...

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT, SIR?

I WAS THINKING MR. CONROY OF ALL THE USELESS PEOPLE IN THE WORLD!



ACTORS, FOR EXAMPLE! PURELY A PEACETIME PRODUCT! NO PLACE FOR THEM DURING A WAR!

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN, SIR!



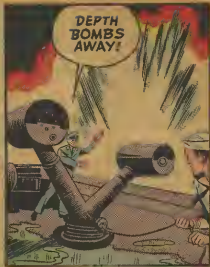
AMERICAN DESTROYER APPROACHES! HEADING NORTH TOWARD PAAASUVI!

WE MUST STOP HER AT ALL COSTS! READY TORPEDOES!



TORPEDO OFF STARBOARD! HARD LEFT RUDDER!







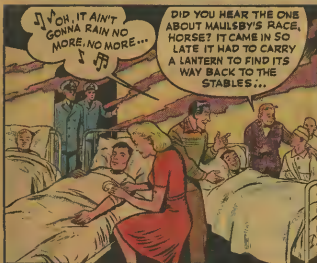


HE'S A  
GONER!



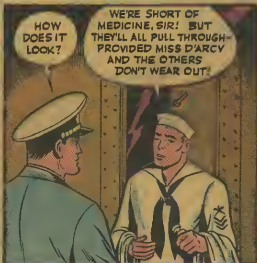
A GOOD  
JOB! WHAT'S  
OUR LOSS,  
CONROY?

FIVE MEN KILLED!  
OVER TWENTY  
WOUNDED! THEY'RE  
DOWN IN THE  
SICK BAY!



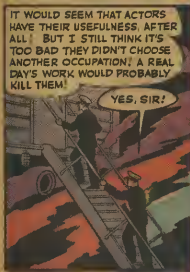
OH, IT AIN'T  
GONNA RAIN NO  
MORE, NO MORE...

DID YOU HEAR THE ONE  
ABOUT MAULSBY'S RACE,  
HORSE? IT CAME IN SO  
LATE IT HAD TO CARRY  
A LANTERN TO FIND ITS  
WAY BACK TO THE  
STABLES...



HOW  
DOES IT  
LOOK?

WE'RE SHORT OF  
MEDICINE, SIR! BUT  
THEY'LL ALL PULL THROUGH  
PROVIDED MISS D'ARCY  
AND THE OTHERS  
DON'T WEAR OUT!



IT WOULD SEEM THAT ACTORS  
HAVE THEIR USEFULNESS, AFTER  
ALL! BUT I STILL THINK IT'S  
TOO BAD THEY DIDN'T CHOOSE  
ANOTHER OCCUPATION! A REAL  
DAY'S WORK WOULD PROBABLY  
KILL THEM!

YES, SIR!



JAPS! HEADED  
OUR WAY!



GOOD  
GLORY! A  
TASK  
FORCE!

THEY'RE  
MOVING ON  
PAASUVI!

NO WONDER THAT  
JAP SUB TRIED TO  
STOP US! THEY  
KNEW WE'D  
SIGHT THIS  
FLOTILLA!

I'LL RADIO  
THE FLEET  
BASE!



THEY'VE OPENED  
FIRE! ... READY  
ALL GUNS!



**FIRE!**



A DIRECT HIT!  
ON THE RADIO  
ROOM!



YOU'RE  
BADLY  
HURT!

THE MESSAGE...  
DIDN'T GET  
THROUGH! OUR  
SHIPS WON'T KNOW  
THE JAPS ARE  
COMING!



I KNOW  
SOMETHING  
ABOUT RADIO!  
I THINK I CAN  
FIX THIS!

YOU  
CAN?



CAN YOU  
GIVE ME FIVE  
MINUTES?

YOU'LL GET EVERY  
MINUTE OF TIME  
THIS SHIP STAYS  
AFLOAT! EVEN  
IF WE HAVE TO  
FIGHT OFF THE  
WHOLE JAP  
FLEET!

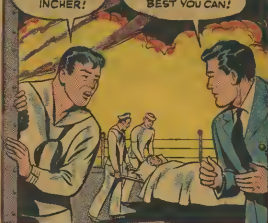


Mortally wounded, Destroyer 171 lashes back with all guns at the terrible barrage of enemy fire!



WE NEED ANOTHER MAN ON THE FIVE-INCHER!

ALL THE MEN WHO CAN WALK ARE FIGHTING FIRES! DO THE BEST YOU CAN!



I'LL TAKE OVER!

BUT MR. HALLAM YOU'RE NOT A COMBATANT! TAKE COVER!

CALL ME JACK! ... ISN'T THAT A SWEET GUN?

SMOOTH AS APPLE CIDER! BUT THE GUY! JAPS WON'T LIKE IT!



ZOWIE! A FOURTEEN-INCHER! THE JAPS ARE SWINGING A HEAVYWEIGHT AT US!



THAT NEXT BROADSIDE WILL FLATTEN US!

WE'RE FINISHED, SIR!

WHAT'S THAT?



IT'S OUR FLEET!... THEY'RE HERE!



THERE GO THE JAPS! HIGH-TAILING FOR THE WIDE OPEN SPACES!

THEY WON'T GET AWAY! WE'LL OUT-GUN 'EM! ... EVERY BLASTED JAP WILL FIND THE SEA'S BOTTOM BEFORE SUNDOWN!

YOU GOT THE MESSAGE THROUGH, MAULSBY!

I WORKED AS A RADIO ENGINEER BEFORE I BECAME A CROONER. SIR, THIS JOB WASN'T SO TOUGH!

HALLAM GOT A CRUISER!

OL' DEAD-EYE JACK -- THAT'S ME!

JACK HALLAM SERVED IN THE LAST WAR! HE WAS A FIRST-CLASS GUNNER'S MATE! HE WAS AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR GALLANTRY!

HMMM! I -- ER -- WANT TO SEE HOW MY FIRST OFFICER IS COMING ALONG!

WHERE'S THE CHIEF PHARMACIST, CONROY?

WOUNDED, SIR! MISS DARCY REMOVED THAT SHELL SPLINTER! SHE USED TO BE A REGISTERED NURSE!

I WANT TO THANK-- THAT IS -- AH -- YOUR FRIENDS AND YOU HAVE BEEN MOST... AH...

COMMANDER, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN YOU AT A LOSS FOR WORDS!

WE'RE STILL LISTING BADLY, SIR! CAN WE MAKE PAABUVI?

YOU BET WE CAN! WE'VE A TROUPE OF ACTORS ABOARD! AND I WOULDN'T MISS THEIR SHOW FOR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD-- NOT AFTER THE SHOW THEY PUT ON FOR THE NAVY!





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Jim Prentice

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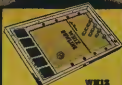
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